We claim:

1.   A method for determining and displaying the status of a user selectable parameter associated with a song stored in a digital audio player, comprising the steps of:

reading a preference table from a mass storage device associated with the digital audio player during a startup operation of the digital audio player, the preference table including an entry for each selected song stored in the mass storage device, each entry including a unique identifier associated with the selected song and parameter data indicative of the status of the user selectable parameter;

reading a playlist selected by the user;

displaying one or more entries included in the selected playlist on a display device associated with the multi-track audio player;

determining one or more unique identifiers associated with each entry included in the selected playlist;

comparing the determined unique identifiers with the unique identifiers included in the preference table to determine states of the selectable parameter associated with the entries in the selected playlist;

displaying the determined states of the selectable parameter with associated selected playlist entries on the display device.

2.   The method according to claim 1, wherein the parameter data represents the status of at least 3 user selectable parameters, including whether the entry is tagged to be included in a playlist, whether the song is liked, and whether the song is disliked.

3.   The method according to claim 2, further comprising the step of updating the preference table each time the user indicates whether a selected song is to be tagged, indicated to be liked, or indicated to be disliked.

4.   The method according to claim 3, further comprising the step of storing the updated preference table in the mass storage device during a shutdown operation of the digital audio player.

5.   The method according to claim 1, wherein each preference table entry includes playlist identification data that includes path information for locating a selected song on the mass storage device.

5   6.   The method according to claim 1, wherein each unique identifier included in the preference table is generated using a hash function.

7.   The method according to claim 1, further comprising the step of generating a playlist sequence using parameter data indicating whether a song is
10   liked or whether a song is disliked, in response to user selection of a shuffle playmode.

8.   A portable hand-held digital audio player, comprising:
        a mass storage device;
15   user input device for allowing a user to select a playlist for display and select a state of a user selectable parameter associated with a song stored on the mass storage device;
        a display device; and
        a controller coupled to the mass storage device, the user input device, and the
20   display device, the controller generating a preference table in response to user selection of the state of the user selectable parameter, storing the preference table to the mass storage device during a shut down operation of the digital audio player, and reading the preference table from the mass storage device during a startup operation of the digital audio player, wherein the preference table includes an entry for each
25   selected song stored in the mass storage device, each entry including a unique identifier associated with the selected song and parameter data indicate of the status of the user selectable parameter,
        the controller determining one or more unique identifiers associated entries in a playlist in response to user selection of the playlist, comparing the determining one
30   or more unique identifiers with the unique identifiers in the preference table, determining the status of the selectable parameters in response to the comparison, and causing the display device to display one or more of the entries in the playlist with the status of the user selectable parameter associated with the entries.

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9.   The digital audio player according to claim 8, wherein the parameter data represents the status of at least 3 user selectable parameters, including whether the entry is tagged to be included in a playlist, whether the song is liked, and whether the song is disliked.

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10.   The digital audio player according to claim 9., wherein the controller updates the preference table each time the user indicates whether a selected song is to be tagged, indicated to be liked, or indicated to be disliked.

10   11.   The digital audio player according to claim 10, wherein the controller stores the updated preference table in the mass storage device during a shutdown operation of the digital audio player.

12.   The digital audio player according to claim 8, wherein each preference

15   table entry includes playlist identification data that includes path information for locating a selected song on the mass storage device.

13.   The digital audio player according to claim 8, wherein each unique identifier included in the preference table is generated using a hash function.

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14.   The digital audio player according to claim 8, wherein the controller generates a playlist sequence using parameter data indicating whether a song is liked or whether a song is disliked, in response to user selection of a shuffle playmode.

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